

MEETING MINUTES



CITY OF ROCKVILLE TOWN CENTER TRAFFIC CALMING MEETING: *Area 3 (Woodley Gardens/College Gardens)*

Rockville Senior Center
December 8, 2004, 7:00 p.m.

Steering Committee Members Present:

- Gary Cole
- Karen Bartlett
- Jennifer Jones
- Noelle Fonseca
- Thomas Fonseca
- Steve Mullholland
- James Conway
- Suzanne Bagheri
- Jon Oberg
- *Note: Gerald Leighton expressed interested in joining the Steering Committee but was not able to attend this meeting.*

City Staff:

- Larry Marcus, Chief, Traffic and Transportation
- Katherine Kelly, Transportation Planner
- Scott Ullery, City Manager

INTRODUCTION

On December 8, 2004, City staff and resident representatives met to discuss potential traffic calming solutions in a group of neighborhoods including Woodley Gardens and College Gardens -- designated as *Area 3*. This process is part of the City's larger effort to proactively address new traffic generated by Town Center development.

While the meeting proceeded as an informal discussion, City staff noted comments, problems, and possible solutions.

DISCUSSION POINTS

Following personal introductions, basic agenda guidelines, and the presentation of traffic calming examples, the floor was opened to dialogue.

1. Access to the Senior Center has been an item of discussion among the community for awhile.
 - a. Three scenarios have been discussed:
 - i. Open access to the north parking lot from W. Gude Drive but keep the north and south parking lots separated
 - ii. Open access to the north parking lot from W. Gude Drive and connect the north and south parking lots so that autos can travel through
 - iii. Keep the current configuration, with no access from Gude
 - b. Committee members asked where previous counts took place, to determine how many cars were going to the Senior Center? Where they 24-hr. counts?
Staff Response: The counts were 24-hr, on Carnation Dr., between Crocus Dr. and Senior Center
2. Committee members expressed concern about Ride-On buses along Azalea and Crocus
 - a. One committee member stated that ~30 kids live on Azalea and is concerned about buses going fast along Azalea
 - b. Committee members expressed concern regarding 25 MPH on Crocus—Ride-On buses go 27-35 MPH. They requested that staff talk with Ride-On to get a smaller size bus on this route and express to Ride-On that they prefer Aster as the route for Ride-On to use.
3. Nelson to Azalea or Nelson to Crocus were the routes identified as the most commonly used routes to access the Senior Center
4. Committee members expressed concern about Town Center traffic using Nelson as a cut-through (SB) to I-270
 - a. Q: What is the cut-through route for industrial traffic from E. Rockville?
A: Staff and Jon Oberg: through King Farm (Redland)
5. Gude Interchange
 - a. Concern regarding noise along Gude, especially if it becomes an interchange.
 - b. If Gude is redesignated as MD28, how would this affect Senior Center access? Would the traffic light be 3- or 4-way (Piccard, Senior Center driveway, and Gude)
 - c. Gude interchange lessens the impact on Nelson St. (to access Town Center)
6. Committee members reached consensus to support *not* having a through-route in the Senior Center parking lot (i.e., no connection from a new “north” parking lot off Gude to a “south” parking lot off of Carnation)
7. If there is a Senior Center at Fallsgrove, coordinate funding to help finance the Gude interchange.

8. Committee members requested that staff coordinate with JBG to support funds to light the ped/bike path leading from Upper Rock all the way down to Gude. This is with regard to the new senior units at Upper Rock and access to the Senior Center.
9. Multimodal access issues
 - a. Sidewalk widths—some are narrow on Martin's Lane
 - b. Consensus to support a shuttle along Nelson. Make it "cute"/original/distinct. Shuttle to Metro, with 30 minute frequencies, 9-5 weekdays and on weekends.
10. Next Steps
 - a. Meeting on Senior Center Access issue (joint PW/Rec and Parks coordination) in mid-February. Include an estimated cost for the Gude interchange.
 - b. PW Conduct counts at the following locations (1 are first priority, 2 are second priority)



ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00.

Report on the Town Center Traffic Calming Meeting, 12/08/2004

The meeting took place at the Senior Center with eight residents of Woodley Gardens, Larry Marcus, Katherine Kelly, City Manager Scott Ullery, and Jon Oberg.

No one was present from College Gardens or West End North neighborhoods.

Woodley Gardens residents were primarily interested in their local issue: traffic to and from the Senior Center. The facility gets a great deal of traffic as it is a community center as well as a senior center. The residents want an entrance to the center off Gude Drive, with an adjoining parking lot, as long as there is no route to cut through to the streets of their neighborhood.

The Woodley Gardens residents said that the volume of traffic coming to the Senior Center via Nelson Street will likely have an adverse impact on Town Center traffic, which is another reason to provide a new entrance off Gude. They believe it is best to get as much traffic off Nelson as possible, especially where it meets MD 28 in the West End neighborhood.

Another option is to make the Senior Center more welcoming to pedestrian and bicycle traffic coming in from Gude and Piccard. The current access to the Senior Center from these streets is awkward. Senior housing is being built in King Farm, a few blocks up the street on Piccard, and senior MPDU housing is planned as part of Upper Rock, just off Piccard. JBG, the Upper Rock developer, has committed to improving the pedestrian and bike routes from Upper Rock to Gude.

Woodley Gardens residents said that they are close enough to Town Center to consider walking, biking, or taking a shuttle bus. One resident said he frequently walks with his family to Town Center, as the sidewalks are adequate to link the two areas. He said a utility pole should be moved as it blocks one of the sidewalks and makes it difficult for strollers and wheelchairs to pass. Another resident said he would take a shuttle bus every day if he had the option, as the shuttle would also go by the Rockville Metro. The residents said unanimously that if a Town Center shuttle bus came to Nelson Street, the whole neighborhood would use it.

The residents thought a special Town Center shuttle bus would attract more ridership than a Ride-On bus.

Those participating in the meeting said that Town Center traffic was not as big an issue for them as their local Senior Center traffic matter, which is why more residents did not turn out for the meeting.

-- Jon Oberg